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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

UPON THE

SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT

DURING THE YEAR 1939.

HUNTINGDON :

FRIEND & FLINT, PRINTERS, GRAMMAR SCHOOL WALK.

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TO THE
GODMANCHESTER URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the District for the year ending 3rd December, 1939.

Considerable time was spent during the year in connection with additional duties which arose as a direct result of the Civil Defence programme ; these efforts were intensified on the outbreak of hostilities and consequently some curtailment of normal routine work resulted.

The outstanding feature of the year, however, was the mass-movement by the Ministry under the Government Evacuation Scheme of expectant mothers, women and young children, and unaccompanied school children from the dangerous industrial areas into the safer areas of the country. These evacuees brought with them problems of many sorts with which the small staffs of the Reception Areas had to contend and to solve ; these problems, however, will no doubt be discussed at a more appropriate time.

Staff.

Medical Officer of Health :

D. S. BUCHANAN, M.B., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector :

A. TILLOTSON. A.R.San.I., resigned 30/9/39.

F. J. EAST, appointed 13/11/39.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area	...	...	...	...	4,956 acres.
Estimated Population (Mid. 1939)	...				2,122
		(Mid. 1938)	...		2,025
Number of Inhabited Houses, end of					
1939	...	...	...	...	647
Rateable Value	...	...	...		£7,702
Value of Penny Rate		...	...	...	£31 0s. 2d.

During the course of 1939 no radical change took place in the industry of the district which is chiefly connected with agricultural activities. In addition there is one factory engaged in the manufacture of hosiery products and another in the manufacture of cereal foods.

Vital Statistics.

Live Births			Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	28	19	9
Illegitimate	...	...	2	1	1
			—		
			30		

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 14·8.

Still Births	—	—	—
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Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births —

Deaths	21	9	12
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Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 9·8 Death Rate Adjusted 7·7.

Deaths from Puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar General's Short List) :—

	Deaths.	Rate per 1000 Total (Live and Still) Births.
No. 29 Puerperal sepsis
No. 30 Other puerperal causes
	—	—
Total

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All Infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	nil
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births			nil
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	nil
Deaths from Cancer (All ages)	...	...	4
Deaths from Measles (All ages)	...	...	nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (All ages)		...	nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 years)	...	...	nil

Rates.

	Per 1,000 Population.			Per 1,000 Live Births
	Live Births.	Still Births.	Death Rate.	Infantile Mortality.
Godmanchester	14·8	—	7·7	—
England and Wales	15·0	0·59	12·1	50
London (Adm. County)	12·3	0·44	11·9	48
126 County Boroughs and Great Towns including London	14·8	0·59	12·0	53
148 Smaller Towns	15·6	0·57	11·2	40

The following table shows the classification of deaths from all causes, Registrar-General's figures.

Godmanchester.

Causes of Death.				Males.	Females.	Totals.
All Causes	...	...	...	9	12	21
1 Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	...	...	...	—	—	—
2 Measles	...	...	...	—	—	—
3 Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	—	—	—
4 Whooping Cough	...	...	...	—	—	—
5 Diphtheria	...	...	...	—	—	—
6 Influenza	...	...	...	1	—	1
7 Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...	—	—	—
8 Cerebro-spinal fever	...	...	...	—	—	—

Causes of Death.					Males.	Females.	Totals
9	Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	—	—	—
10	Other Tuberculosis diseases	...	...	...	—	—	—
11	Syphilis	...	...	...	—	—	—
12	General paralysis of the insane, tabes dorsalis	...	...	...	—	—	—
13	Cancer, Malignant disease	...	...	...	1	3	4
14	Diabetes	...	...	...	—	—	—
15	Cerebral haemorrhage, etc.	...	...	...	—	—	—
16	Heart disease	...	...	...	2	3	5
17	Aneurysm	...	...	...	—	—	—
18	Other circulatory diseases	...	...	...	2	2	4
19	Bronchitis	...	...	...	—	—	—
20	Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	1	1	2
21	Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	—	—	—
22	Peptic Ulcer	...	...	...	—	—	—
23	Diarrhoea, etc. (under 2 years)	...	...	...	—	—	—
24	Appendicitis	...	...	...	—	—	—
25	Cirrhosis of Liver	...	...	...	—	—	—
26	Other diseases of Liver, etc.	...	...	...	—	—	—
27	Other digestive diseases	...	...	...	1	1	2
28	Acute and chronic nephritis	...	...	...	—	—	—
29	Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	—	—	—
30	Other puerperal causes	...	...	...	—	—	—
31	Congenital debility, premature birth, malformations, etc.	...	...	...	—	—	—
32	Senility	...	...	...	—	—	—
33	Suicide	...	...	...	—	—	—
34	Other violence	...	...	...	1	—	1
35	Other defined diseases	...	...	...	—	2	2
36	Causes ill-defined or unknown	...	...	...	—	—	—

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

(a) LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Bacteriological specimens from Practitioners in the district are examined and reported upon either at the Pathological Laboratory, Cambridge, or The Clinical Research Association, London.

(b) AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(1) For the removal of infectious cases a motor ambulance is available at the Isolation Hospital, Huntingdon.

(2) For non-infectious and accident cases a motor ambulance is available also in Huntingdon.

(c) NURSING IN THE HOME.

Nursing in the district is carried on by the nurse provided by the Nursing Association. This nurse is also a qualified midwife and attends the majority of maternity cases and also acts as a Health Visitor.

No provision is made for the home visiting of Measles, Whooping Cough and Infantile diarrhoea.

All cases of Tuberculosis are visited by the Tuberculosis Health Visitor and a report with details of home conditions and circumstances is completed.

(d) CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

The Hunts. County Council provide the following health services :—

School Clinic	...	Every Monday 2 p.m.
Infant Welfare...		Last Thursday in month 2-30 p.m.
Orthopaedic	...	1st & 3rd Tuesday in month 11.30 a.m.
Eyes	...	By Appointment.
Nerve Clinic	...	1st & 3rd Wednesday in month 2-30 p.m.
Dental	...	By Appointment.

The above Clinics are held at Castle Hill House, Huntingdon, and are available for, and within a reasonable distance of this Borough.

Cases of Tuberculosis when reported are investigated by the County Medical Officer.

Venereal Disease—Addenbrookes Hospital—Tuesday 3 p.m., Thursday 7 p.m., both sexes.

Under the Ante and Post Natal Scheme, provided by the County Council, expectant mothers are examined twice during the pregnancy (or oftener if necessary) and once after confinement.

(e) HOSPITALS—PUBLIC & VOLUNTARY.

- (1) Fever—The treatment of infectious diseases is carried out at the Hospital for infectious Diseases at Huntingdon, which is provided by the Joint Hospital Board.

- (2) The County Hospital, Huntingdon, and Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, continue to carry out the general hospital service in the district.
- (3) Provision is made for the reception of maternity cases into either the hospital at the Huntingdon Institution when home conditions are not suitable for the management, or, the County Hospital, Huntingdon when complications make it desirable or necessitous. Subsequent to the arrival of expectant mothers under the Government Evacuation Scheme further accommodation for maternity cases was required and, as a result, an Emergency Maternity Hospital was opened by the Hunts. County Council at Paxton Park.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water.

A mains supply of water of excellent quality and quantity is provided in the Borough, the water being purchased in bulk from the Huntingdon Borough Water Undertaking. Despite this many wells are still in use some in which the water is of a doubtful nature.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Sanitary conditions of the district remain very much the same as in previous years and very few conversions from the pail closet to the W.C. are made. The majority of houses still have pail closets (493) although the houses are provided with main water supply. (296). It is reasonable to suppose that the next step will be the consideration of a sewerage scheme for the district followed by a conversion scheme to a complete water-borne system. The present sewers would be totally inadequate and unsuitable to take sewage from Water Closets.

The sewers are mostly of stoneware and take the waste and surface water together with the road washings, and discharge into an open ditch outside the town which in turn flows into the river.

Public Cleansing :—Dry refuse is collected in covered carts and disposed of by Controlled Tipping.

Refuse from Pail Closets is collected at nights by carts and is eventually used as manure.

Cesspools are emptied in the same way.

Housing.

A survey of the housing throughout the district was made and a programme was in the act of being drawn up, when the outbreak of hostilities occurred. This therefore, along with other matters, has had to be placed in abeyance.

The new Building Byelaws were confirmed by the Ministry of Health on the 13th day of August, 1939.

During the year 5 new houses were erected all by private enterprise.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk Supply.

There are 12 registered cowkeepers in the district. The duty of sampling milk is carried out by the County Council, but the Borough Council is still responsible for the registration of dairies and cowkeepers and for the enforcement of the sanitary provisions.

Meat and other Foods.

There are 3 slaughter houses in the district. All carcasses were inspected.

Sanitary Inspector's Report.

To the Medical Officer of Health.

Sir,

I beg to submit my report for the year ending 31st December, 1939.

Owing to the resignation of the former Sanitary Inspector and the greatly increased call upon his time in other directions, records of inspections made are incomplete.

The present Sanitary Inspector held the office for the last seven weeks of the year and during that time received and investigated a number of verbal complaints. These complaints were dealt with informally under the Housing Act, 1936, or the Public Health Act, 1936.

There are no lodging houses or canal boats registered in the district and no offensive trades have been established.

Housing Act, 1936.	No. of houses condemned	...	...	nil
	No. of houses closed	...	...	nil
	No. of houses made habitable	...	...	2
Closets.	No. of E.C's. converted	...	...	1
	No. of W.C's. provided	...	...	4
Water supply.	No. of samples analysed	...	...	nil
	Public Supply substituted for well	...	...	4
Infectious diseases.	No. of houses disinfected	...	...	3
	No. of schools disinfected...	...	...	nil
	Bedding and clothing disinfected	...	...	nil

Food Inspection.

The inspection of food and premises where food is prepared, stored or sold is now delegated to the County Council under the Food and Drugs Act, 1939, but the Borough Council is still responsible for the enforcement of the Milk and Dairies Regulations and the Meat Regulations. The Borough Council is also responsible for the enforcement of the Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933, and the sanitary provisions of the Shops Act, 1934. This will lead to some overlapping, but until more experience has been obtained of the working of the Food and Drugs Act it is impossible to say how this will operate.

No samples of food were taken for analysis during the year and no unsound food was seized.

Factories Acts, 1937.

No. on register (including bakehouses) in respect of which Borough Council is responsible for the enforcement of sanitary provisions of Part I	...	...	...	6
No. of bakehouses on register	...	...	...	4
No. on register in respect of which Borough Council is responsible for enforcement of section 7 only	...	...	...	2
No. of inspections made	...	...	...	8
Nuisances abated	...	...	...	3

Inspection of bakehouses has now been delegated to the County Council under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, but the Borough Council is still responsible for the enforcement of the sanitary provisions of Part I of the Factories Act, 1937.

Total No. of Inspections made during 1939	...	...	100
Total No. of Notices served (informal)	...	...	12
Complaints received. Total No. of	...	...	40
Premises, houses, etc., under sec. 91	No. inspected		12
	Nuisances abated		12
Pool, ditch, gutter, etc. ...	No. inspected		1
	Nuisances abated		1
Privy, urinal, cesspool, ashpit ...	No. inspected		1
	Nuisances abated		nil
Drain, drain traps, etc. ...	No. inspected		10
	Nuisances abated		10
Slaughter Houses ...	No. licensed		3
	No. of inspections		30

F. J. EAST,

Sanitary Inspector.

Prevalence of and Control Over Infectious and Other Diseases.

Notifiable Diseases.

Additions to the list of notifiable infectious diseases occurred as a result of the Measles and Whooping Cough Regulations made by the Minister of Health which came into force on 1st November, 1939.

During the past year there were only sporadic cases of infectious disease.

The following table gives the incidence of notifiable diseases (other than tuberculosis) in the area during 1939.

Disease.	Total.	Under 1 year	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 and upwards.	Cases adm. to Hosp.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	2	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia	4	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	...	2
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Chickenpox	6	...	...	...	2	...	2	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...

Diphtheria Immunisation.

Recognising the possibility of outbreaks of infectious disease resulting from mass immigration into the district, all arrangements were made to commence an intensive drive for the immunisation of children against diphtheria.

Tuberculosis.

Age Periods.	New Cases				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 ...								
1 ..								
5 ...				1				
15 ...								
25 ...								
35 ...								
45 ...								
55 ...								
65 and upwards								
Total	1	...	...	...	...

No action was found to be necessary under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations 1925, in connection with persons suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis employed in the milk trade, or under section 172 of the Public Health Act 1936, which deals with the compulsory removal to hospital of persons suffering from tuberculosis.

I am,
Your obedient servant,

D. S. BUCHANAN,
Medical Officer of Health.

